**City of Seattle**
Edward B. Murray, Mayor

**Department of Planning and Development**
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE**
**ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF**
**THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Application Number**: 3013303

**Applicant Name**: Radim Blazej of Caron Architecture

**Address of Proposal**: 3078 SW Avalon Way

## SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

Land Use Application to construct a 7-story structure containing 102 residential units. Parking for 59 vehicles to be provided below grade; one level accessed off Avalon Way (30 spaces) and a separate level accessed off the alley (29 spaces). Existing structures to be demolished.

The following approvals are required:

**Design Review** pursuant to Chapter 23.41, Seattle Municipal Code, with Departures:

**Development Standard Departure** to allow parking access off a non-alley street. (SMC 23.45.536)

**Development Standard Departure** to exceed the maximum driveway slope. (SMC 23.54.030)

**SEPA – Environmental Determination –** Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

**SEPA DETERMINATION**: [ ] Exempt [ ] DNS [ ] MDNS [ ] EIS

[X] DNS with conditions

[ ] DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition, or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

Site:

Site Zone: Midrise (MR)
West Seattle Hub Urban Village

Nearby Zones:
North: MR
East: MR
South: MR
West: SF 5000

Lot Area: 19,196 sq. ft.

Site Development

The site is located mid-block facing Avalon Way, three lots north of SW Genesee Street. An existing house and garage occupy the south half of site, and two, one-story apartment buildings occupy the north half. The site slopes approximately 33 ft from southwest corner to northeast corner, with a steep approximately 12 foot slope running parallel along the Avalon Way frontage.

Existing vehicular access is from the alley on the west. Pedestrian access is from the adjacent Avalon Way sidewalk. The site is a mapped Environmentally Critical Areas (ECA), Steep Slope. The applicant applied for and received a limited steep slope exemption dated August 7, 2012, as follows:

"ECA review is required. Based on a review of the submitted information and the City GIS system, DPD concludes that the project qualifies for the criteria established in SMC 25.09.180.B2a and b. Specifically, the steep slope areas have been previously developed and the grade changes appear to have been created by previous legal grading for the right-of-way and site development. For this reason, DPD will waive the required ECA Steep Slope Area Variance associated with this application and for the corresponding Land Use planning application No. 3013303. Except as described herein, the remaining ECA Submittal, General, and Landslide - Hazard Development Standards and related criteria still apply."

Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character

A six-story apartment building is adjacent to the south; a two-story apartment building is adjacent to the north; one- and two-story houses with backyards are across the alley to the west; and a mix of houses and four-story apartment buildings are located across Avalon Way to the east. Buildings along Avalon are a mix of older houses and apartments, with newer four- to six-story residential buildings, with limited commercial uses in the vicinity. To the west is a pocket of predominantly single family houses with backyards and garages along the alley, of mixed ages and conditions.

## BACKGROUND

This project requires Design Review pursuant to SMC 23.41. There was one Early Design Guidance (EDG) meeting before the Soutwest Design Review Board (DRB) on September 13, 2012 (notice date of August 23, 2012), and two Recommendation meetings, on November 21, 2013 (notice: October 31, 2013) and January 16, 2014 (notice: December 26, 2013). The project MUP application was deemed complete on February 27, 2013, and therefore did not meet the code required time window to be vested back to the code in effect on the EDG application date (SMC 23.76.026.C.2).

Between the MUP application (February 27, 2013) and the first Recommendation meeting on November 21, 2013, a council-approved code change became effective on this site (SMC 23.45.516.B.1). In brief, that code change eliminated a 15 ft bonus height provision in the MR zone in this location (total height possible with bonus = 75 ft), and the project was reduced in height to be compliant with the new code for this location (60 ft maximum height) for the first Recommendation meeting on November 21, 2013.

For clarification, the building straddles a steep slope so the number of stories visibly changes from the Avalon Way side to the alley. At the Recommendation meeting, the building showed

seven stories to Avalon and five stories to the alley, compliant with the 60 ft maximum height, and is consistent with the city-adopted method of measuring height on sloping sites. The project description identifies the seven stories visible to the predominant public street, which is Avalon Way.

## I. ANALYSIS – DESIGN REVIEW

### EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: September 13, 2012

### DESIGN PROPOSAL

The Early Design Guidance (EDG) Design Proposal booklet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website: http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The booklet is also available to view in the DPD file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Mailing Address:** **Public Resource Center**
700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:** PRC@seattle.gov

### PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

During public comment, the following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Noted the project is adjacent to a single family zone and according to West Seattle design guideline B-1, "refined transitions in height, bulk and scale, in relationship to surrounding context…must be considered" (multiple comments restated this concern and guideline).
- Supported the color concept sketch, and the project should include vibrant colors, textures and material variety.
- Agreed that the 2 options with a continuous 6 story wall along the alley, and the adjacent SF zone, were less desirable than option C, but still concerned with bulk and scale of C. It looks larger and taller than existing apartments to south.
- Requested the building incorporate sloped roofs and other features to mitigate the boxiness.
- Noted the northeast corner is very tall, especially considering other buildings in the vicinity step-down with the slope heading north along Avalon Way.
- Opposed to any parking access off the alley, for safety concerns and congestion are there already. [Applicant responded they want to distribute the parking to not be 100% onto busy Avalon, and avoid overly steep ramps.]
- Cautioned that exterior materials must be durable and high quality.
- Encouraged the footprint along Avalon to setback and be similar to the setback of existing neighbors to the north and south.
- Requested option C to reduce height 1-2 stories, reduce bulk, and probably unit count.
- Questioned if the existing trees will be retained; applicant responded they are being assessed.

- Concerned with the addition of noise/visual screening of courtyard along alley, to not impinge on backyards of neighbors, and requested project provide alley downlighting for safety.
- Commented that the courtyard on alley of option C was odd.

## INITIAL RECOMMENDATION MEETING: November 21, 2013

## DESIGN PROPOSAL

The Recommendation #1 Design Proposal booklet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website: http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The booklet is also available to view in the DPD file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

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## PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

During public comment, the following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Noted the project is visually better than at EDG, but is still too big and not compatible with the adjacent buildings or the single family zone across the alley (several comments restated this opinion of the height and bulk).
- Stated the building should be lower and step down matching the Avalon Way slope.
- Requested adequate site lighting and/or cameras for safety and security, especially along the alley and in the side yards, but the light should not spillover onto adjacent properties.
- Requested the building incorporate sloped roofs, shingles or other residential treatments to mitigate the boxiness, especially toward the alley.
- Noted the ground floor windows along Avalon are large and transparent into living space, and suggested integrated louvers or screens to provide privacy for the 'fishbowl' effect.
- Stated the Avalon frontage should be less commercial looking and incorporate landscaping and material details more residential in character.
- Suggested more scale adjustments on the alley frontage facing the single family.
- Opposed to any parking access off the alley. [Staff note: code requires the alley access]
- Cautioned that the bright white exterior cladding would fade and change over time in the NW climate, and suggested less white surfaces and a warmer shade of that color.
- Encouraged more reveals and planer relief in the wall materials, especially at the top detail of the brick base, and generally more sophistication in the detailing.

## FINAL RECOMMENDATION MEETING: January 16, 2014

## DESIGN PROPOSAL

The Recommendation #2 Design Proposal booklet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number at this website: http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The booklet is also available to view in the DPD file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

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Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:** PRC@seattle.gov

## PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

During public comment, the following comments, issues and concerns were raised:

- Noted the project has been refined to address design concerns, and is a good design, but suggested the roof penthouse be reduced in height.
- Stated the height reduction of about 3 feet since last meeting is not sufficient.
- Stated the height and bulk are not compatible with the existing structures adjacent and the single family buildings across the alley (two public commenters).
- Noted the trash dumpsters are internalized, and clarified they will be wheeled out next to the alley (but not in the alley right of way) for pick up.
- Stated the structure should slope with the grade along Avalon Way.
- Suggested more scale and height adjustments on the alley frontage facing the single family.
- Opposed to any parking access off the alley. [Staff note: code requires the alley access]

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members (the Board) provided the following siting and design guidance. The Board identified the following **Citywide Design Guidelines** (**A-1, A-2,** etc) & **West Seattle Junction Neighborhood specific guidelines** (*in italics*) of HIGHEST PRIORITY for this project at the EDG Meeting. Under each priority guideline, the EDG comments are followed by the Initial Recommendation comments, and the **Final Recommendation comments in bold.**

The Priority Design guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text of all guidelines please visit the Design Review website: http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/whoweare/designreview/designguidelines/default.htm

**Page references below are to the Recommendation #2 booklet dated January 16, 2014.**

## A. Site Planning

~~**A-1** Responding to Site Characteristics.~~

**A-2** **Streetscape Compatibility.** The siting of buildings should acknowledge and reinforce the existing desirable spatial characteristics of the right-of-way.

***West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:***

*A pedestrian-oriented streetscape is perhaps the most important characteristic to be achieved in new development in the Junction's mixed use areas (as previously defined). New development—particularly on SW Alaska, Genesee, Oregon and Edmunds Streets—will set the precedent in establishing desirable siting and design characteristics in the right-of-way.*

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting**, the Board discussed that while not proposing commercial uses at ~~a mixed use~~ street level, the appearance and quality of the 2 story loft units and the adjacent landscaping/public realm is crucial to establishing a pedestrian friendly street edge. They encouraged high quality, commercial grade materials and landscaping. The treatment along the alley should also be high quality and intentionally designed, not just a fence.

**At the Initial Recommendation Meeting,** the Board supported the generous openings and proportions of the ground floor, and the proposed patios, low walls and cedar slat fence design as shown on pg 22, but requested the following refinements to that ground level:

- Raise the floor levels of the two north units 18"-24" to afford some vertical privacy layering for occupants.
- Add integrated louvers or screens in all ground floor units to provide occupant privacy options, and add scale and pedestrian interest to the street.
- Integrate fritted or translucent glass in the glass panes to provide some privacy.
- Change the wall-mount fixtures or add a material 'plaque' behind them to create a better scale for these objects against the wall surface.
- Consider a deeper offset of the top brick course to create a stronger shadow and larger reveal with the white wall surface above.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board applauded the revisions per each item above, and supported the street façade refinements as shown (pg 14, 23, and 24) including the wood louvers, raised levels, light fixture plaques and the brick soldier course.**

~~**A-3** Entrances Visible from the Street. **A-4** Human Activity. New development should be sited and designed to encourage human activity on the street.~~
~~West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:~~

**A-5** **Respect for Adjacent Sites.** Buildings should respect adjacent properties by being located on their sites to minimize disruption of the privacy and outdoor activities of residents in adjacent buildings.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board ~~discussed h~~encouraged ~~ow~~ the side yards ~~should~~ to be landscaped and the proposed windows staggered to buffer the

windows and privacy of adjacent neighbors (existing window overlays to be required), and the design of courtyard and roof terraces should buffer overlooks of the adjacent balconies and backyards.

**At the Initial Recommendation Meeting,** the Board applauded the reflected window analysis (pg 10/12) and the careful placement of proposed windows to respect adjacent windows and balconies.

The Board requested a more solid, continuous row of tree canopies along the alley, to create a privacy screen to the neighbors from upper levels of the proposed building, but maintaining eye level visibility to the alley. The tree species selected should maintain leaves as long as possible, be mature at planting and have planter troughs large enough to not stunt the root balls.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the tree quantity and Crimson Spire Oak species shown along the alley per pg 38, and recommended a condition that at least three more of those trees wrap the south property line at the corner to buffer the courtyard. The Board also recommended a condition that all those 14 trees be a 3.5 inch caliper at installation, to ensure they create adequate visual buffering.**

~~**A-6** Transition Between Residence and Street. **A-7** Residential Open Space.~~

**A-8** **Parking and Vehicle Access.** Siting should minimize the impact of automobile parking and driveways on the pedestrian environment, adjacent properties, and pedestrian safety.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board discussed that both vehicular entries should consider pedestrian safety and sight lines when detail designed, yet be a minimal portal on the Avalon elevation; the B~~b~~oard did NOT exclude vehicle entry to only one location.

**At the Initial Recommendation Meeting,** the Board agreed the two portals reduce alley impacts, but do not to force all vehicles onto Avalon. The Board supported all measures to ensure the sight triangles and safety of both vehicle access points, including the right-in/right-out limit at Avalon Way.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the access and portal design, including the addition of a pedestrian guard as shown on pg 25.**

~~**A-9** Location of Parking on Commercial Street Fronts.~~

~~**A-10** Corner Lots. Building on corner lots should be oriented to the corner and public street fronts. Parking and automobile access should be located away from corners.~~
~~West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:~~

**B. Height, Bulk and Scale**

**B-1** **Height, Bulk, and Scale Compatibility.** Projects should be compatible with the scale of development anticipated by the applicable Land Use Policies for the surrounding area and should be sited and designed to provide a sensitive transition to near-by, less intensive zones. Projects on zone edges should be developed in a manner that creates a step in perceived height, bulk, and scale between anticipated development potential of the adjacent zones.

***West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:***

*Current zoning in the Junction has created abrupt edges in some areas between intensive, mixed-use development potential and less-intensive, multifamily development potential. In addition, the Code-complying building envelope of NC-65' (and higher) zoning designations permitted within the Commercial Core would result in development that exceeds the scale of existing commercial/mixed-use development. More refined transitions in height, bulk and scale—in terms of relationship to surrounding context and within the proposed structure itself—must be considered.*

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board discussed this topic at length. They requested street elevations along Avalon, showing the full facades of adjacent 2 buildings to south and those to north. They considered the other massing options which placed the courtyard to the east, but referred back to option C in deference to the reduced bulk along the alley and the adjacent "less intensive zone". They agreed stepping back the upper stories on all sides is warranted, especially at the west side facing the SF zone. They supported the common roof deck at the northeast, but strongly suggested reducing the overall height of the northeast corner approximately one floor. The length of the north wall, currently generating a departure request, should be studied to trim the corners, to afford light to the northern neighbors, and/or simply shortened to reduce the bulk towards the alley.

**At the Initial Recommendation Meeting,** the Board applauded the reduction of the north wall length, and the elimination of the departure for Structure Depth. The Board appreciated the revised design is appreciably less bulky than shown at EDG, but requested the following two options (or a combination) be studied to further reduce the building height impacts, but did not request elimination of an entire floor of units:

- Reduce the current floor-to-floor heights to lower the top parapets 3-5 ft.
- Study pushing the parking deeper into the site, lowering the entire building, even if this means a steeper ramp off Avalon, and/or other implications which should be clearly shown as pros and cons at the next meeting. The Board realized a terraced courtyard might be one on these implications, to not create a moat along the alley.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board carefully reviewed the alternative parking study provided, and supported the reduction in floor to floor heights presented on pg 33. The Board agreed the parking has been pushed as low as possible and yet maintain a courtyard and units that are not buried into a 'moat' condition, and to maintain 2 separate ramp access points, and ramps with viable slopes (see departure discussion).**

**The Board supported the reduced floor to floor heights, minimal west parapet, and slightly sunken courtyard as shown on pg 33, which net a west height that averages 48 ft above the alley, considerably below the 60 ft height limit. The Board noted the roof penthouse is the minimal width of projection above the roof line, yet affords access to the northeast roof deck.**

## C. Architectural Elements and Materials

~~**C-1** Architectural Context. New buildings proposed for existing neighborhoods with a well-defined and desirable character should be compatible with or complement the architectural character and siting pattern of neighboring buildings.~~

~~West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:~~

~~**C-2** Architectural Concept and Consistency. Building design elements, details and massing should create a well-proportioned and unified building form and exhibit an overall architectural concept. Buildings should exhibit form and features identifying the functions within the building. In general, the roofline or top of the structure should be clearly distinguished from its facade walls.~~

~~West Seattle Junction-specific supplemental guidance:~~

~~**C-3** Human Scale. The design of new buildings should incorporate architectural features, elements, and details to achieve a good human scale.~~

~~West Seattle Junction-specific supplemental guidance:~~

**C-4** **Exterior Finish Materials.** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board agreed the proposed modulation and deep reveals of the massing are crucial to mitigating the bulk (especially along Avalon), and this should be supported by a high quality, durable and interesting cladding palette, on all sides. That palette should employ a range of colors, materials and textures more pronounced than those shown in the EDG sketches.

**At the Initial Recommendation Meeting,** the Board agreed the proposed design exhibits generally good proportions, but requested the following refinements to better respond to context:

- Maintain the dark, corrugated material attic and 'gasket' facing Avalon, but reduce the amount (and/or color) of that same dark material on the alley façade, where it is overwhelming, especially the three of five levels closest to the alley.
- Add more brick, or another masonry material, as a base on all alley façades.
- Reduce the large window sizes/proportions on the white bays facing the alley.
- Add more fine-scale and warmer materials on the alley facades, possibly a new material not found elsewhere on the project. The Board agreed the project would be cohesive even if certain materials are used only on the alley façade.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board applauded all the refinements to the alley façade shown on pg 12, which directly responded to each of the points above, including the brick base, green lap siding, and translucent window panels which improve privacy on the alley. The Board also endorsed the warmer off-white color shown as the predominant white panel surfaces around the entire building.**

~~**C-5** Structured Parking Entrances.~~

## D. Pedestrian Environment

**D-1** **Pedestrian Open Spaces and Entrances.** Convenient and attractive access to the building's entry should be provided. To ensure comfort and security, paths and entry

areas should be sufficiently lighted and entry areas should be protected from the weather. Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian-oriented open space should be considered.

***West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance:***

*Design projects to attract pedestrians to the commercial corridors (California, Alaska). Larger sites are encouraged to incorporate pedestrian walkways and open spaces to create breaks in the street wall and encourage movement through the site and to the surrounding area. The Design Review Board would be willing to entertain a request for departures from development standards (e.g. an increase in the 64% upper level lot coverage in NC zones and a reduction in open space) to recover development potential lost at the ground level.*

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board requested the applicant consider a pass-through or pedestrian path in one of the side yards, and to carefully design a screen along the alley courtyard to protect adjacent backyard privacy ~~yet~~ and encourage ~~be~~ an attractive and safe alley presence. The B~~b~~oard also applauded the 2 story scale and street presence of the Avalon lobby, and encouraged further scale and pedestrian interest in the street-facing loft façade designs.

**At the Initial Recommendation Meeting,** the Board recognized the side yard stair/path was no longer viable, and supported the open, fence-less design shown along the alley (pg 20).

The proposed courtyard design appears cold and minimal (pg 25), with little amenity to attract users or sociability (also see EDG guidance under E-2). The Board requested a more diverse and interesting design for the courtyard, including different paving patterns and more warm and contrasting materials such as wood and metal planters, not all concrete of identical height.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the revised courtyard design, including the color and size variation of the pavers as shown on pg 25, and the introduction of wood walls, benches and other warm materials as shown on pg 20.**

~~**D-2** Blank Walls.~~

~~**D-3** Retaining Walls.~~

~~**D-4** Design of Parking Lots Near Sidewalks. **D-5** Visual Impacts of Parking Structures. The visibility of all at-grade parking structures or accessory parking garages should be minimized. The parking portion of a structure should be architecturally compatible with the rest of the structure and streetscape. Open parking spaces and carports should be screened from the street and adjacent properties.~~

~~**West Seattle Junction -specific supplemental guidance** **D-6** Screening of Dumpsters, Utilities, and Service Areas.~~

~~**D-7** Personal Safety and Security.~~

**D-8** **Treatment of Alleys.** The design of alley entrances should enhance the pedestrian street front.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board emphasized that adequate lighting and security along the alley is key, through good design and "eyes on the alley" strategies. They also requested a full length, detailed and dimensioned elevation of the

alley elevation showing the parking wall condition and materials, including landscaping and courtyard screen design. (See also Departure #1 discussion below)

**At the Initial Recommendation Meeting,** the Board requested larger scale elevations and more details on all lighting along the alley and side yards. The Board requested further studies to reduce the height and size of the parking vent box, and exploration of whether it can be located somewhere less visible such as the north wall onto the alley ramp.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the relocation of the parking vent, and the array of lighting bollards and wall fixtures as shown on pg 12 and 39.**

~~**D-9** Commercial Signage. NA~~

~~**D-10** Commercial Lighting. NA~~

~~**D-11** Commercial Transparency. NA~~

**D-12** **Residential Entries and Transitions.** For residential projects in commercial zones, the space between the residential entry and the sidewalk should provide security and privacy for residents and a visually interesting street front for pedestrians. Residential buildings should enhance the character of the streetscape with small gardens, stoops and other elements that work to create a transition between the public sidewalk and private entry.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board discussed that the Avalon lobby entrance ~~deserves~~ should strive to provide the elements described in this guideline.

**At the Initial Recommendation Meeting,** the Board supported the large canopy, address numbers and bench which identify the primary lobby entrance on Avalon Way, but requested a more interesting scoring pattern at this important transition– at least similar to the residential patios nearby.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the revised, smaller grain linear paving patterns at the lobby entry and in the patio stoops, as shown on pg 25.**

**E. Landscaping** ~~**E-1** Landscaping to Reinforce Design Continuity with Adjacent Sites.~~

**E-2** **Landscaping to Enhance the Building and/or Site.** Landscaping, including living plant material, special pavements, trellises, screen walls, planters, site furniture, and similar features should be appropriately incorporated into the design to enhance the project.

**At the Early Design Guidance Meeting,** the Board encouraged maximizing the size of the roof deck, and the planted or softscape areas of the courtyard and roof deck because the site will be fully developed leaving~~; the site would be almost 100% built on, with~~ little remaining permeable surface other than the sideyards. They also encouraged landscaping, and pedestrian features along Avalon; and trellises, play structures, seating etc in the courtyard and on the roof deck, for use and amenity to residents.

**At the Initial Recommendation Meeting,** the Board agreed certain blank walls needed green screens or other treatments: the 10+ ft tall south retaining wall on Avalon; all the concrete surfaces of the parking vent at the southwest corner (or a different design for venting that is less pronounced on the alley; see comments under D-8).

The Board requested a more clear and specific landscape plan at the next meeting, not showing confusing materials or designs (pg 37/38) not relevant to the proposal. Each specific tree should be clearly identified, and its height, canopy and other features at planting clearly described.

**At the Final Recommendation Meeting, the Board supported the revised planting design and species shown on pg 38, with the additional trees and size specified under the comments at A-5. The Board suggested a more durable turf replace the proposed sedum as the edge along the Avalon Way sidewalk. The Board recommended a condition that a permanent mesh create the vegetated green screens at the two locations facing Avalon Way.**

## DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

The Board's recommendation on the requested departure(s) will be based upon the departure's potential to help the project better meet these design guideline priorities and achieve a better overall design than could be achieved without the departure(s).

At the time of the Final Recommendation meeting, the following departures were requested:

1. **Access to Parking (SMC 23.45.536):** In brief, the Code requires all parking and service access to be from the alley, if an improved alley exists. The applicant proposes a departure to allow a second access to the lower parking level from a curb cut on Avalon Way, and cites the code provision 23.45.536.C.4 for steeply sloping sites.

   **The Board voted unanimously in recommendation of this departure, stating it would provide an overall design that better meets the intent of Design Review guidelines, and decreasing the car volume and width of the parking portal on both the alley and street frontages, and improving pedestrian safety in both locations. (C-5, D-7)**

2. **Driveway Slope (SMC 23.54.030):** In brief, the Code requires a maximum ramp slope of 15%. The applicant proposes a ramp to the alley of 20%.

   **The Board voted unanimously in recommendation of this departure would provide an overall design that better meets the intent of Design Review guidelines, by allowing the parking and overall building to be depressed further into the ground, thereby reducing the height to the adjacent context. (A-5, B-1)**

## BOARD RECOMMENDATION

The recommendation summarized below was based on the design review packet dated January 16, 2014, and the materials shown and verbally described by the applicant at the January 16, 2014 Design Recommendation meeting. After considering the site and context, hearing public comment, reconsidering the previously identified design priorities and reviewing the

materials, the five Design Review Board members recommended APPROVAL of the subject design and departures, with the following conditions:

1) **Alley and South Property Line Trees:** Add 3 Crimson Spire Oak trees along the south property line at the west corner, and specify those and the 11 trees along the alley be a 3.5 inch caliper at installation, to ensure they create adequate visual buffering. (See A-5)

2) **Green Screen Wall Revisions**: Add a permanent rectangle of mesh with depth and texture to support the vegetation and provide scale and visual interest at the following locations: about 8 x10 ft at the southeast brick wall facing Avalon Way; about 8 x 8 ft at the east wall of the north parking ramp. (See E-2)

Response to Recommended Design Review Conditions:

1) The applicant added 4 trees of the indicated species in the specified location, and specified all 15 trees to be the indicated caliper at installation. The proposal meets recommended condition #1.

2) The applicant added the mesh of the indicated sizes at the two specified locations. The proposal meets recommended condition #2.

**DECISION – DESIGN REVIEW**

The proposed design and Development Standard Departures are **CONDITIONALY GRANTED** subject to the conditions listed below.

## II. ANALYSIS - SEPA

Environmental review resulting in a Threshold Determination is required pursuant to the Seattle State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), WAC 197-11, and the Seattle SEPA Ordinance (Seattle Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 25.05).

The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated February 12, 2013. The Department of Planning and Development (DPD) has annotated the environmental checklist submitted by the project applicant; reviewed the project plans and any additional information in the project file submitted by the applicant or it's agents; and any pertinent comments which may have been received regarding this proposed action have been considered. The information in the checklist, the supplemental information, and the experience of the lead agency with the review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, and certain neighborhood plans and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority. The Overview Policy states in part: "*where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation*" subject to some limitations.

Under such limitations/circumstances, mitigation can be considered. Thus, a more detailed discussion of some of the impacts in appropriate.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

The SEPA public comment period began on march 7, 2013, and was extended to April 3, 2013 by public request. Numerous SEPA comments were received.

A. SHORT-TERM IMPACTS

Construction activities could result in the following adverse impacts: construction dust and storm water runoff, erosion, emissions from construction machinery and vehicles, increased particulate levels, increased noise levels, occasional disruption of adjacent vehicular and pedestrian traffic, a small increase in traffic and parking impacts due to construction related vehicles, and increases in greenhouse gas emissions. Several construction-related impacts are mitigated by existing City codes and ordinances applicable to the project such as: the Stormwater Code (SMC 22.800-808), the Grading Code (SMC 22.170), the Street Use Ordinance (SMC Title 15), the Seattle Building Code, and the Noise Control Ordinance (SMC 25.08). Puget Sound Clean Air Agency regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality. The following analyzes construction-related noise, air quality, greenhouse gas, construction traffic and parking impacts, as well as mitigation.

Noise

Noise associated with construction of the building could adversely affect surrounding uses in the area, which include residential uses. Surrounding uses are likely to be adversely impacted by noise throughout the duration of construction activities, in particular the residences existing across the alley to the west. Due to the proximity of the project site to residential uses, the limitations of the Noise Ordinance are found to be inadequate to mitigate the potential noise impacts. Pursuant to the SEPA Overview Policy (SMC.25.05.665) and the SEPA Construction Impacts Policy (SMC 25.05.675 B), mitigation is warranted.

Construction activities (including but not limited to demolition, grading, deliveries, framing, roofing, and painting) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays from 7am to 6pm. Interior work that involves mechanical equipment, including compressors and generators, may be allowed on Saturdays between 9am and 6pm once the shell of the structure is completely enclosed, provided windows and doors remain closed. Non-noisy activities, such as site security, monitoring, and weather protection may occur outside these hours.

If the applicant intends to work outside of the limits of non-holiday weekdays between 7am and 6pm, the applicant will submit **a Construction Noise Mitigation Plan**. This plan will include steps 1) to limit noise decibel levels and duration and 2) procedures for advanced notice to surrounding properties. The plan will be subject to review and approval by DPD. In addition to the Noise Ordinance requirements to reduce the noise impact of construction on nearby properties, all construction activities shall be limited to the following:

1) Non-holiday weekdays between 7:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.
2) Non-holiday weekdays between 6:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M. limited to quieter activities based on a DPD approved mitigation plan and public notice program outlined in the plan.
3) Saturdays between 9:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. limited to quieter activities based on a DPD approved mitigation plan and public notice program outlined in the plan.
4) Emergencies or work which must be done to coincide with street closures, utility interruptions or other similar necessary events, limited to quieter activities based on a DPD approved mitigation plan and public notice program outlined in the plan.

Air Quality

Construction for this project is expected to add, temporarily, particulates to the air that will result in a slight increase in auto-generated air contaminants from construction activities, equipment and worker vehicles; however, this increase is not anticipated to be significant. Federal auto emission controls are the primary means of mitigating air quality impacts from motor vehicles as stated in the Air Quality Policy (Section 25.05.675 SMC). To mitigate impacts of exhaust fumes on the directly adjacent residential uses, trucks hauling materials to and from the project site will not be allowed to queue on streets under windows of the nearby residential buildings. This must be included in the **Construction Traffic Management Plan**, required by condition; see discussion under Traffic and Parking below.

Should asbestos be identified on the site, it must be removed in accordance with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA) and City requirements. PSCAA regulations require control of fugitive dust to protect air quality and require permits for removal of asbestos during demolition. This will assure proper handling and disposal of asbestos.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Construction activities including construction worker commutes, truck trips, the operation of construction equipment and machinery, and the manufacture of the construction materials themselves result in increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions which adversely impact air quality and contribute to climate change and global warming. While these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant.

Construction Traffic and Parking

Duration of construction of the apartment building may last approximately 15 months. During construction, parking demand will increase due to additional demand created by construction personnel and equipment. It is the City's policy to minimize temporary adverse impacts associated with construction activities and parking (SMC 25.05.675 B and M). Analysis cited under "Long Term Impacts - Transportation" below indicates parking utilization along streets in the vicinity is not at capacity, however the addition of construction workers could impact on-street spaces during the mid day, and mitigation is warranted.

A **Construction Worker Parking Plan** is required prior to the issuance of any demolition, grading or construction permits, to be approved by DPD. This plan shall include the following elements be given to all construction workers: identified off-street parking lots in the vicinity, with daily spaces available; instructions to not disrupt on-street parking or operations; transit route and schedule information and encouragement to use transit whenever possible.

The construction of the project also will have adverse impacts on both vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the vicinity of the project site. During construction a temporary increase in traffic volumes to the site will occur, due to travel to the site by construction workers and the transport of construction materials. Approximately 6,000 cubic yards of soil are expected to be excavated from the project site. The soil removed for the structure will not be reused on the site and will need to be disposed off-site. Excavation and construction materials will require numerous truck trips, in a congested location with other construction occurring in the vicinity.

City code (SMC 11.74) provides that material hauled in trucks not be spilled during transport. The City requires that a minimum of one foot of "freeboard" (area from level of material to the

top of the truck container) be provided in loaded uncovered trucks which minimize the amount of spilled material and dust from the truck bed enroute to or from a site. Considering the volume of truck trips anticipated during construction, it is reasonable that truck traffic avoid the afternoon peak hours; large (greater than two-axle) trucks will be prohibited from entering or exiting the site after 4:00 PM. This must be included in the Construction Traffic Management Plan, required by condition.

Truck access to and from the site shall be documented in a **Construction Traffic Management Plan**, to be submitted to DPD and SDOT and approved by SDOT prior to the issuance of any demolition, grading or construction permits. This plan shall include a prohibition on trucks queueing on streets under windows of nearby residential buildings, minimizing large truck movements along the alley, and also shall indicate how pedestrian connections around the site will be maintained during the construction period, with particular emphasis on maintaining pedestrian access along the west side of Avalon Way adjacent to the project site. The Plan shall also include haul routes for expected excavation of soils. Compliance with Seattle's Street Use Ordinance is expected to mitigate any additional adverse impacts to traffic which would be generated during construction of this proposal.

B. LONG –TERM IMPACTS

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated as a result of approval of this proposal including: greenhouse gas emissions; parking; potential blockage of designated sites from the Scenic Routes nearby; possible increased traffic in the area. Compliance with applicable codes and ordinances is adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of most long-term impacts and no further conditioning is warranted by SEPA policies. However, greenhouse gas emissions; views from scenic routes; height, bulk and scale; traffic and transportation; and parking impacts warrant further analysis.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Operational activities, primarily vehicular trips associated with the project construction and the project's energy consumption, are expected to result in increases in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions which adversely impact air quality and contribute to climate change and global warming. While these impacts are adverse, they are not expected to be significant, therefore, no further mitigation is warranted.

Fauntleroy/West Seattle Bridge Scenic Route

The building is within 500 feet of the SEPA designated Scenic Route of Fauntleroy/West Seattle Bridge, but it will not block public views from that route of any of the SEPA designated features.

Height, Bulk & Scale

The project went through a Design Review process which addressed the issue of Height, Bulk & Scale; see the above Design Review Analysis for details of the process and design changes. In summary, most of the five-story bulk of the structure visible from the alley and adjacent single family neighbors, was shifted away from the alley towards Avalon Way; the overall building height was reduced about four (4) feet below the 60 ft. maximum; the wing closest to the alley was reduced from five (5) stories to three (3), and that wing was shifted 23 feet away from the alley property line; windows facing the alley were reduced or eliminated to ensure privacy; tall-canopy trees were added to the alley and south property lines to ensure privacy to neighbors; and materials along the alley façade were diversified to add residential scale.

Pursuant to SEPA Policy 25.05.675.G.2.c: Height, Bulk and Scale, "the Citywide Design Guidelines (and any Council-aproved, neighborhood Design Guidelines) are intended to mitigate the same adverse height, bulk and scale impacts addressed in these policies. A project that is approved pursuant to the Design Review process is presumed to comply with the height, bulk and scale policies. This presumption may be rebutted only by clear and convincing evidence that height, bulk and scale impacts documented through environmental review have not been adequately mitigated. Any additional mitigation imposed by the decisionmaker pursuant to these height, bulk and scale policies that have undergone design review shall comply with the design guidelines applicable to the project."

Pursuant to SEPA policy 25.05.675, the project went through Design Review and numerous design adjustments, supported by adopted design guidelines, were implemented in consideration of the zone change at the adjacent alley. Additional SEPA Mitigation of height, bulk and scale is not warranted.

Transportation

A transportation impact analysis dated February 5, 2013, was prepared for the project by TraffEx Northwest Traffic Experts. Based on rates from the Institute of Transporation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation manual the analysis reports the proposed uses will generate 462 weekday daily trips; 33 AM peak hour trips, and 39 PM peak-hour trips. As ITE's multi-family trip rates are drawn from a variety of locations, including suburban development, they may result in relatively high forcasts when applied in urban areas, such as Seattle. They are provided here as a conservatively high estimate of likely trip generation. The traffic the proposed use contributes to the roadway system at peak times and the distribution of the traffic from the site does not exceed acceptable street screenline capacities. No adverse transportation impacts are anticipated from the development of the project.

Parking

The project's traffic consultant, TraffEx, estimated that the peak parking demand rate for this project would be approximately 0.9 vehicles per apartment unit. This rate reflects the proximity of the project to transit and to nearby retail services. Using this rate, the 102 units in the project would generate a parking demand of about 92 vehicles at peak times; for residential projects, peak hours typically occur overnight.

The project is proposing 59 parking stalls; a peak demand of 92 vehicles would result in a spillover of about 33 vehicles. TraffEx conducted a parking utilization study to document existing on-street utilization rates within 800' of the project site. Taking into account removal of some existing curb parking along SW Avalon Way to accommodate the project's curb cut, as well as the recent removal of 26 spaces on SW Genesee Street east of SW Avalon Way, the study identified an on-street supply of 193 parking spaces. Evening counts on two weekday evenings identified an average of 134 vehicles parked in these spaces; therefore, about 69% of the on-street spaces near the project site currently are occupied. The additional spillover generated by the project will result in approximately 167 spaces being occupied, for an occupancy rate of 87%. This would be a little above the effective on-street parking capacity, which typically is identified as 85%. Parking spaces would be available in the area, but could be slightly harder to find at peak times.

A nearby project at 3050 SW Avalon Way currently is under permit review, and also would be expected to generate spillover parking demand. The project would construct a 14-unit apartment building containing 102 bedrooms; no parking would be built. Studies of parking demand for similar projects in Seattle have identified an average peak demand of 0.35 vehicles/unit. This rate would result in a parking demand of about 36 vehicles from this project. As this project is roughly 300 feet north of 3078 SW Avalon Way, some of the vehicles generated by this project likely would park outside the 800' distance of the on-street study area defined for 3078 SW Avalon Way. If it is assumed that roughly two-thirds of the vehicles from this project would park within the 800' study area, an additional 24 vehicles would seek parking in this area during peak hours. This would result in a cumulative parking demand of roughly 191 vehicles, which would be two less than the identified parking capacity. Additional circulation could result at peak times as drivers search for parking, as any particular block front might be at 100% capacity. This level of parking utilization near the project site likely would push the search for available spaces slightly beyond the 800' identified by the parking study.

This site is located within the boundaries of the West Seattle Hub Urban Village, and is 360 feet walking distance from the nearest transit stop on a frequent transit service street (SW Avalon Way). Pursuant to SEPA policy 25.05.675.M.2.b.2: "No SEPA authority is provided for the decision maker to mitigate the impact of development on parking availability for residential uses located within: … iii: portions of urban villages within 1,320 feet of a street with frequent transit service, measured as the walking distance from the nearest transit stop to the lot line of the lot;…"

Summary

The Department of Planning and Development has reviewed the environmental checklist submitted by the project applicant; reviewed the project plans which were outcomes of the Design Review process; reviewed additional information in the file; and any comments which may have been received regarding this proposed action have been considered. As indicated in the checklist and this analysis, this action will result in probable adverse impacts to the environment. However, due to their temporary nature and limited effects, the impacts are not expected to be significant, given the conditions and mitigations contained herein.

## DECISION - STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

☒ Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21.030(2) (c).

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 (2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed

environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

This DNS is issued after using the optional DNS process in WAC 197-11-355 and Early review DNS process in SMC 25.05.355. There is no further comment period on the DNS.

## SEPA - CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Prior to Issuance of a Demolition, Grading, or Building Permit

1. If the applicant intends to work outside of the limits of non-holiday weekdays between 7am and 6pm, a **Construction Noise Mitigation Plan** shall be required and approved by DPD, prior to issuance of a demolition, grading, or building permit, whichever is issued first. In addition to the Noise Ordinance requirements to reduce the noise impact of construction on nearby properties, all construction activities shall be limited to the following:
    i. Non-holiday weekdays between 7:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.
    ii. Non-holiday weekdays between 6:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M. limited to quieter activities based on a DPD approved mitigation plan and public notice program outlined in the plan.
    iii. Saturdays between 9:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. limited to quieter activities based on a DPD approved mitigation plan and public notice program outlined in the plan.

    Emergencies or work which must be done to coincide with street closures, utility interruptions or other similar necessary events, limited to quieter activities based on a DPD approved mitigation plan and public notice program outlined in the plan.

2. The applicant shall provide DPD with a copy of a **Construction Traffic Management Plan**, including **Construction Haul Routes**, both aspects approved by Seattle Department of Transportation, including minimizing of large truck use of the alley, plus prohibition on trucks queueing on streets under windows of nearby residential buildings, and time limits on large (greater than two-axle) trucks.

3. The applicant shall provide DPD with a **Construction Worker Parking Plan**, including: identified off-street parking lots in the vicinity, with daily spaces available; instructions to not disrupt on-street parking or operations; transit route and schedule information and encouragement to use transit whenever possible. This shall be provided to the Land Use Planner for review and approval (Garry Papers, (206) 684-0916, garry.papers@seattle.gov).

During Construction

4. Construction activities (including but not limited to demolition, grading, deliveries, framing, roofing, and painting) shall be limited to non-holiday weekdays from 7am to 6pm. Interior work that involves mechanical equipment, including compressors and generators, may be allowed on Saturdays between 9am and 6pm once the shell of the structure is completely enclosed, provided windows and doors remain closed. Non-noisy activities, such as site security, monitoring, weather protection shall not be limited by this condition. This condition may be modified through a Construction Noise Management Plan, required prior to issuance of a building permit as noted in condition #1.

## DESIGN REVIEW - CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Prior to Certificate of Occupancy

5. The Land Use Planner shall inspect materials, colors, and design of the constructed project. All items shall be constructed and finished as shown at the design recommendation meeting and the subsequently updated Master Use Plan set. Any change to the proposed design, materials, or colors shall require prior approval by the Land Use Planner (Garry Papers, (206) 684-0916, garry.papers@seattle.gov).

6. The applicant shall provide a landscape certificate from Director's Rule 10-2011, indicating that all vegetation has been installed per approved landscape plans. Any change to the landscape plans approved with this Master Use Permit shall be approved by the Land Use Planner (Garry Papers, (206) 684-0916, garry.papers@seattle.gov).

For the Life of the Project

7. The building and landscape design shall be substantially consistent with the materials represented at the Recommendation meeting and in the materials submitted after the Recommendation meeting, before the MUP issuance. Any change to the proposed design, including materials or colors, shall require prior approval by the Land Use Planner (Garry Papers, (206) 684-0916, garry.papers@seattle.gov).

Signature: (signature on file) Date: May 15, 2014
Garry Papers, M.Arch, NCARB
Senior Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

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